



## U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

# *Dedication Memorializes "Duck Cop"* **Joe Oliveros**



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During the 1980's and into the early 1990's, "Duck Cop" Joe Oliveros often patrolled the 1,000-acre area east of Mer Rouge, Louisiana that hosts thousands of wintering waterfowl. Because the area attracts teal, mallard, wood duck, pintail, gadwall, and many other species, it is known as one of the best duck hunting areas in northeast Louisiana, attracting waterfowl poachers as well as avid sportsmen. The outlaw poachers who were apprehended by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Special Agent Joe Oliveros, dubbed him "Duck Cop," but today, November 13, 2002, "Duck Cop" becomes a term of honor. The land and wildlife that Joe Oliveros protected from illegal hunting are being dedicated to him.

Special Agent Joe Oliveros was one of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's best "Duck Cops." He worked for the Service for almost 29 years, and, in 1999, Oliveros won the Guy Bradley Award, the highest recognition a wildlife law enforcement agent can receive. The award is presented annually to enforcement officers who display outstanding leadership, dedication, and excellence in their field. In 1994, the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies also honored Oliveros as Conservation Officer of the year.

### **A Career Of Service**

Commissioned as a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Special Agent in 1981, Oliveros apprenticed in New Orleans, then transferred to a single-agent duty station in Monroe, Louisiana where he worked more than 60 hours a week enforcing laws protecting migratory waterfowl and educating the public about responsible hunting and wildlife conservation. His work in northern Louisiana was particularly important as Louisiana winters more than one quarter of North America's ducks.

In 1994, Oliveros transferred to Jacksonville, Florida to work in a two-man law enforcement office. There, he launched an effective campaign to reduce the illegal hunting of ducks and doves from Florida's Panhandle to Lake Okechobee. He also spearheaded efforts to protect endangered manatees from boat collisions by apprehending boaters who were exceeding posted manatee protection speed limits.

Throughout his career, Oliveros also served as an instructor at most "basic schools" for new Service special agents and refuge officers. Cancer claimed Oliveros in April 2001.

### **Joe Oliveros' Legacy**

The land being dedicated to Oliveros was acquired by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 1991 from the Farm Services Agency. Nearly all of the land has been planted to bottomland hardwood trees. The Louisiana black bear, federally listed as threatened, roams the area. And, still, thousands of ducks and other migratory waterfowl are there too, due in part to Joe Oliveros.



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